4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

the parents often do not really care and children can pretty much get away with doing what they want.[14]

With regard to other expressions of the recognition of individual dignity, one rarely sees in Bang Chan any physical or even verbal coercion. (The rare use of whipping, noted above, is to punish transgression, not to implement action.) Other than in horseplay, children do not push each other around; in my twenty-two months in Thailand, I saw not one case of young children in a serious fight, despite the fact that I looked for it. Very rare indeed is the parent who uses force or the threat of force on his child; there is no Siamese equivalent to the American intimidation, "You had better do that or else. . . ." In general, Bang Chaners proceed on the simple assumption that if people, including children, do not do what you ask them, they have good—and more important, private—reasons for responding that way; there is no need for, or interest in, self-justification. The major means of inducing recalcitrants to conform to your wishes is to cajole, wheedle, and flatter them (see particularly the responses to the Sentence Completion items, *"The best way to treat a subordinate is . . ."*; *"The worst way to treat a subordinate is . . ."* in chapter V). A less conscious but more frequently practiced alternative is simply to withdraw support: the parent who turns his back on the child and walks out (particularly evident in our TAT stories),[15] the older sibling who refuses to take his younger ones with him when there is entertainment to be seen, and the like. It must be noted, however, that social disengagement, although frequently utilized, does not always work; often the individual who is left suspended merely accepts the fact and continues about his business. The major point to be recognized is that villagers do not use forms of direct, blatant coercion on others. If soft words or the withdrawal of love will not move them, then their decision, freely determined, must be respected.

Love and affection within the family appear primarily in two forms. Their most typical expression is shown through the gifts, favors, and services people do for each other. The degree of affection that individuals feel toward one another is in fact explicitly measured in these terms. Thus, a father says that of all his daughters, the one who has given him the greatest pleasure is "the one who sells things . . . When she gets money,

[14] In qualification, however, it must be noted that all Bang Chaners are extremely sensitive to social cues—partially as a consequence of having to balance off their individualistic propensities against the demands of the authority system—and here the children ignore their parents only because the latter have indicated by their very halfheartedness that they do not care. The children can, and do, quickly hop to it on the slightest indication of parental seriousness: a stern look, for example. My point, however, is that such looks are comparatively rare.

[15] In another paper, Hanks and Hanks (1963) make the same observation on the basis of behavioral materials.